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STATES RELATIONS SERVICE  
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Office of Extension Work  
North and West

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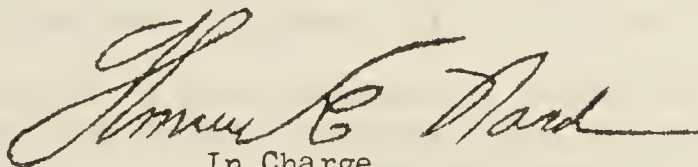
LETTER TO HOME ECONOMICS EXTENSION WORKERS

A number of home economics specialists have recently been asked how in their judgment this office might best serve them. The almost universal reply has been, "By keeping us in touch with the methods used by workers along our own line in other States". These specialists manifest an almost universal willingness, in spite of the extra exertion involved, to contribute information about the outstanding features of their own work in order that this office may be able to act as a clearing house for the benefit of all specialists. It is in response to this desire expressed by the specialists, that this letter has been prepared by Miss Miriam Birdseye, the member of our Staff assigned to study subject-matter extension work in home economics as carried on in the various States more especially with Smith-Lever funds or other cooperative funds. Much of the material contained in this present letter was gathered during visits made by Miss Birdseye in the spring and early summer to States employing home economics specialists.

In order that this office may be in a position to act as a clearing house of information for the workers in the several States it is essential that the individual specialists shall keep us informed regarding the development of their work. If this is done we shall no doubt have much interesting material for distribution through correspondence, visits to the States or otherwise. Duplicates of record forms, and suggestive projects; programs of extension schools and training schools for local leaders; plans for follow-up work in counties without home demonstration agents; duplicates or photographs of especially effective illustrative material, mimeographed or printed subject-matter prepared for your own use or that of your home demonstration agents - all will be of value to this office and to the workers in your own line in other States, and we shall endeavor to find means of passing the information on. Material should be sent, if possible, in duplicate so that we may have one copy for our office files, and one for use on field trips.

Assuring you of our desire to be of service to you,

Very truly yours,



In Charge  
Extension Work with Women.

## THE SPECIALIST, THE PROJECT, AND THE RECORD BLANK

One of the most important contributions the specialist can make to the work of the extension team is the outlining of projects, home demonstrations, and supplementary record blanks. The specialist can, of course, help the agent to outline a project for a problem peculiar to her own county, but more frequently she has the opportunity to do a much larger piece of work by outlining, in conference with the State leader or her representative, a suggestive project that will form the basis of a unified plan of work for all the counties that have chosen to work out the same general problem. It is understood, of course that such a suggestive State project is always subject to redraft to fit local conditions. The advantage of the suggestive project for the State is that the forms and record blanks will be uniform for every county where the work is being undertaken, and the data reported can be tabulated for the whole State. That such a suggestive State project need not paralyze initiative on the part of the county organization is shown by a most interesting report received from Miss Janet G. Cation, clothing specialist of Iowa, containing a tabulation of the splendid results of the wool-saving project undertaken about a year ago in the forty odd counties organized with home demonstration agents. Nine thousand seven hundred and forty two reports were received for summarizing. The report shows very clearly that although all the counties had a uniform goal, no two chose to reach it in exactly the same way. Iowa has several excellent suggestive State projects in mimeographed form, each supplemented by one or more record blanks.

A well drawn record blank is one of the most important elements of a project. The States that have been able to secure the most thorough tabulation of the results of their work have been those that had the clearest projects supplemented by the best blanks. It is not a simple matter to work out a good blank, for it involves thinking through the entire piece of work to be done - considering the needs of the women, the reaction in their lives that should be aimed for under the circumstances, the subject matter that must be offered to stimulate that reaction, and the local machinery available for starting, encouraging, and recording it. And in addition to the planning involved, the wording of the blank must be carefully studied to prevent the possibility of misinterpretation. One good way to make a start in planning a suggestive project is to begin with the consideration of the record blank, and certainly no project is complete without one.

A recent illustration of the way in which a good record blank makes possible the tabulation of information is shown on the next page in the blank used in California in connection with the work in millinery, filled in with results of the work done in one county during the visit of the specialist in clothing and home decoration. Indiana agents have used some excellent blanks in connection with reports of work with the hot lunch in rural schools.

Specialists are urged to send in to this office suggestive projects, record blanks, and questionnaires used by them personally or prepared for the use of home demonstration agents.



MILLINERY RECORD BLANK USED IN CALIFORNIA

AND HOW IT WORKS.

HOME HAT MAKING

County  
Center  
Date  
Description of hat  
Cost of materials:  
    Frame  
    Rice net or buckram  
    Wire  
    Cotton flannel  
    Batiste or mull  
    Silk, crepe, or georgette  
    Embroidery silk or yarn  
    Braid or other covering  
    Ribbon  
    Flowers and foliage  
    Hat dye  
    Straw hat  
    Lining  
        Total cost  
Time and labor  
Price of hat in Shop  
Saving on Hat  
Unfinished work

Name:  
Comments:

SUMMARY FOR COUNTY

Work done during visit of clothing specialist with farm-bureau centers of San Bernardino County.

Number of hat meetings	9
Number of preliminary meetings	3
Number of house decoration meetings	2
Attendance at hat meetings	213
Money spent on materials	\$144.82
Money value of hats if purchased	\$1033.00
Money saved to women of county	\$875.38
Average cost per hat	\$ 1.38

NOTE: To save space in this letter, the items on the blank as sent in have been shoved together. A sheet of paper is folded lengthwise, and the original blank is mimeographed on the upper half with a duplicate on the lower half, so that by the use of carbon paper two copies can be made, one for the agent and one for the specialist.

## CLOTHING A POPULAR PROJECT LAST YEAR.

One or more of the following phases of clothing work have been stressed in practically every State: Renovating and remodeling, sewing short cuts, adaptation of commercial patterns, making of dress forms, free-hand cutting and drafting, home dressmaking, and selection of textiles and clothing. Effective use has been made of volunteer leaders in clothing salvage shops, and clothing clinics. "Style Shows" featuring remodeled and home-made garments have closed many extension schools or other exercises in home dressmaking.

Much attention has also been given to millinery.

The Extension Section of the American Home Economics Association, at its annual meeting this year, endorsed a resolution drafted by the Textile Section, urging all workers in clothing to emphasize the clothing budget and the selection of textiles in their teaching this year.

## CLOTHING EFFICIENCY CLUBS IN MASSACHUSETTS.

Under the leadership of Mrs. Ruth S. Reed, clothing specialist, Massachusetts did a conspicuous piece of clothing work last year.

One day a week for five consecutive weeks there was an opening lecture-demonstration on "Better Dressing on Smaller Expenditures" and four working lessons from 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. with one hour intermission at noon. The course covered the following points:--

- A. A fundamental skirt draft was given from which five practical, commonly used patterns were made.
- B. The adjusting of a French waist pattern to personal measure and methods of making other patterns from this line-up.
- C. Putting of skirt and waist together without a fitting and as many other legitimate short cuts as time permitted.

A study of line, color and suitability supplemented each lesson. (From Report). To the fifth lesson the students bring their cloth patterns, already "lined up" and criticized, together with the exact amount of material required to make a simple one piece cotton dress. At this lesson the dress is cut, made, and entirely finished. Waist and skirt are finished separately and basted together at the belt before any trying on is done, since the careful adjustment of the foundation pattern has obviated the necessity of fitting beyond getting the proper slope at the waist line. The "efficiency" part of the course consists in learning to cut out the unnecessary motions in handling and fitting that delay the average home dress maker.



Two additional and unique features of the project are to be noted:-

1. Although there may be any number of "observers", the class taught by the specialist is usually a comparatively small one consisting of volunteer leaders, each one of whom has pledged that with the aid of the home demonstration agent she will extend the training exactly as she has received it to a specified number of women. These pupils in turn become members of the efficiency club by pledging to teach the work if they are considered qualified to do so. From the volunteer-trained group a limited number of leaders may again be picked and these in turn train one or more other women. The agent keeps her eye on the classes and has a deciding vote in picking the members qualified to teach, but after the first group is trained the teaching is done entirely by volunteer leaders under the direction of the agent, the project leader and the president of the Clothing Efficiency Club.

This plan naturally works in more spectacular fashion in a city or a large town than where the population is widely scattered. In the city of Holyoke 150 women last year received the complete training as club members in about six months although the original class taught by the specialist numbered only six. Among the members were many women of foreign extraction. The observers numbered several hundred. In the city of Fall River, the training by volunteer leaders of 32 groups including French, Canadian, Polish, and Italian, was reported in May. The work has also been done very successfully in the open country.

Literally hundreds of local leaders have been trained in Massachusetts in a comparatively few months through this plan, and the end is not yet.

2. The drafting lessons have served to introduce health lessons in right posture and proper corseting. Noticeable results have been obtained in "making over" women with curved backs, prominent abdomens, and hollow chests by the use of properly fitted corsets. The specialist also prescribes simple physical exercises to bring cramped muscles back to health once more.

#### RECREATION - A BIG PROBLEM IN SOME STATES

The Montana extension service is helping solve the recreational problems of its State. Under the direction of Miss Mignon Quaw, assistant State leader of home demonstration agents, there has been assembled the following material:- A small loan library of plays, games, dialogues, recitations, and music suited for the country; lists of good books, victrola records, and pictures suitable for schools and private homes; lists of indoor games to amuse children on rainy days; plans for summer picnics, especially for farm-bureau picnics; lists of new and first class plays suitable for high schools at commencement time; and programs for evening entertainments. Plans for original one-act plays suitable for presentation in the country are being worked out. "The Long Trail", a three-act play

showing rural progress through three generations and especially emphasizing the work of such modern rural institutions as the Extension Service, the Farm Bureau, and the Farm Loan Board, has been presented a number of times with great success this past year by a cast including members of the Montana Extension Service, among them the author, Miss Quaw. This play is already, or shortly will be in print.

#### GATHER AND REPORT PROBLEMS FOR RESEARCH.

At the recent meeting of the American Home Economics Association at Blue Ridge, North Carolina, the Extension Section appointed a Committee on Research. The function of this Committee is to gather and report to the Committee on Research of the association such subjects for research as come to the attention of extension workers. Miss Zenia Kellar, State leader of home demonstration agents for Maryland, is chairman of the committee, and every State leader is ex-officio a member.

Extension specialists can render a valuable service to home economics by keeping their eyes open for bona fide problems for research. Now that the matter has been called to our attention we wonder why we did not begin long ago to catalogue the hundreds of problems that have occurred to us along the lines of household management; house furnishing, clothing, and child care, as well as those in the better developed fields of foods, nutrition and growth. One reason why it is still possible for home economics to be regarded in certain quarters as an undivided and indivisible whole is precisely that so little research and investigation has been undertaken along its various lines.

Much of the expansion of the agricultural colleges and the extension service in agriculture is due to the work of the numerous and well-manned agricultural experiment stations. There is room for equally vital work with the problems of the home, but we can not reasonably hope to have systematic provision made for it until we can present a convincing array of really vital problems that await solution through investigation and research.

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A four page leaflet on the Food Value of Milk with unusually effective illustrations was used in Massachusetts, in connection with the recent milk campaign. This pamphlet may prove suggestive to food specialists, and may be obtained from P. M. Harwood, General Agent, Massachusetts Department of Agriculture, 136 State House, Boston, by whom it was prepared.